



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Hello again.

I hope that everyone is fit and well.

I recently had the pleasure of accompanying Kevin le Roux and Keith Perrett on a rabies vaccination campaign. I was treated to an unexpected calmness in the manner in which the campaign is run. The elders of the remote villages are pre visited to explain the value of the campaign. Thereafter health technicians move into the areas. Loud halers proclaim their presence and slowly local residents bring their dogs and cats forward to be vaccinated. Some basic pet care advice is given to those that need it. Kevin tells me that they have methodically moved through all the rabies outbreak areas and are going to complete their campaign of vaccinating some 650000 animals by the end of the year. The terrain is a big obstacle especially during the wet season but this government department gets their job done. These people are an example of being part of the solution to the many problems we face in South Africa. I am looking in to ways to bring basic health care to these animals in a sustainable manner using Kevin's infrastructure which he and others have worked extremely hard at building up. Well done guys and gals.

News on our local front is that Richard Burchell has passed his specialist exams. He has a few house keeping things to do before qualifying as a specialist. Richard will also help out in doing some of the weekends whilst Trish is on maternity leave. We are glad to see him back.

I hope you have taken advantage of the SPCA sterilisation drive in February. If not, there is still a little time left until the end of the month.

I am attending the World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress in Auckland in early March. Aside from fulfilling my committee requirements I also hope to bring back lots of useful information for our local dogs and cats.

Derek has written an article for this newsletter on the value of blood tests and Trish has written an article on the benefits of dogs to children.

Lauren (our editor) has indexed all the articles on the website should anyone be in search of information on a subject we have already covered. Thank you Lauren.

I would also like to thank my wife, Lauren for her hard work in producing this newsletter. Thank you also to all of you who send her encouraging remarks and comments.

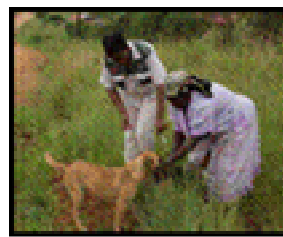
I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and remember nothing is perfect, some things are just a little less trouble than others.

If your contact details have changed please remember to inform us.

Regards

Martin de Scally

Dedicated to the health of your pets.



After Hours

Emergencies:

Please phone
(033) 343 4602

Contact Details:

If your contact details have changed then please inform us .

This month's theme:

Blood tests and Children and dogs

The Nurse's Clinic: Dog Grooming Tips: Sr Debbie Kleu

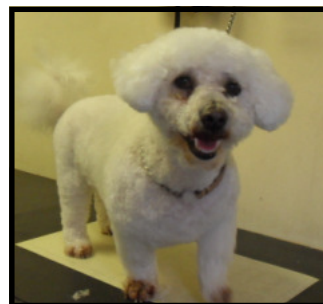
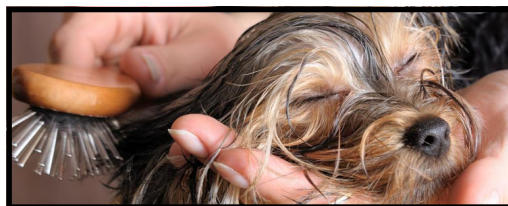
Your pet loves attention from you. One of the best ways to give them that attention is through regular grooming. Frequently brushing your dog removes dirt and helps distribute skin oils, creating a shiny coat. Proper grooming also allows you to see the condition of the dog's skin and to notice the early stages of flea or tick infestations and skin infection irritations, lumps and bumps.

Some pets just like to roll about in the dirt, others are great about grooming themselves. If your pet has a long or thick coat, a daily grooming session is ideal. A dog with less hair can often be groomed weekly. However, the more frequently you groom, the quicker and easier it is for you both.

Proper grooming sessions include:

- ✎ Going over the dog thoroughly with a brush or comb that reaches the skin to bring the loose hair and dirt to the surface.
- ✎ Repeating the process with a finishing tool, the goal is to remove the loose hair and dirt from the surface.
- ✎ Check the dogs ears. If you are at all concerned we have our free nurse's clinic to help you.
- ✎ Wiping the area around the eyes gently with some warm damp cotton wool.
- ✎ Keeping the teeth clean. Daily brushing is ideal, but twice weekly will help with oral health. We do have dental check-ups offered in our free nurse's clinics where we can help you to brush their teeth and decide on specific diets and if a full anaesthetic and dental scale is necessary.
- ✎ Nail trimming: This should be done regularly especially if the pet lives on carpets only. Spend time getting your pet accustomed to having his feet and legs handled, and the trimming will go much easier.
- ✎ Bathing: There may be times when you need to bath your pet. Sometimes for skin conditions it's necessary as part of the treatment plan. Please be sure to use the correct PET shampoo, fill the sink or tub with 3-4 inches of lukewarm water. Rinse then lather thoroughly being careful not to get the shampoo in their eyes. Rinse off well and towel dry. Never use human shampoo on your dog.

Sometimes it is necessary to make use of a professional dog groomer. If you have a special breed that needs a certain cut or a show dog going to be in the ring then the correct groom is essential. These are special people who are trained and able to turn your pooch into a show piece!



HILTON VETERINARY PARLOUR

Heather Walters is running a parlour at our hospital. This will meet your demand for a personalised service in the area.

Your precious pets will be handled by Heather personally in a caring compassionate manner. She caters to all types and sizes, whether it is a simple wash and dip or a complicated clip.

Bookings can be made by contacting Heather on 076 2798589.

The Benefits of Blood Tests: by Dr Derek Clover

At Hilton Veterinary Hospital we are fortunate enough to have a fully operational in house laboratory. This means that we can run organ, endocrine, electrolyte and disease profiles as well as blood counts in a couple of minutes if needed.

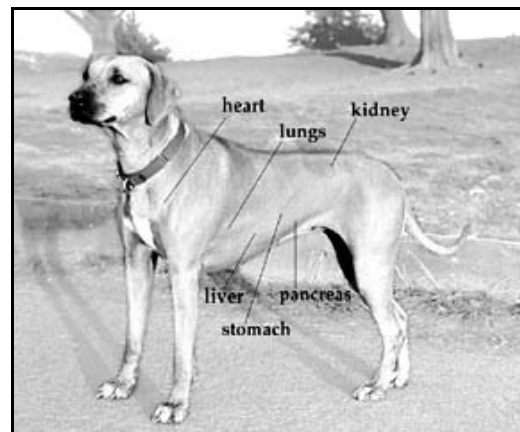
The benefits of an in house laboratory are numerous. Although blood machines are mainly used for the specialist cases, it is tremendously advantageous to have an in house laboratory available for the use in the general and emergency side of the practice when the need arises.

The ability to complete accurate diagnostic tests enables us to establish a diagnosis and start treatment in as short a time as possible. This in turn increases the likelihood of a complete and speedy recovery. If a compromised animal requires surgery a pre-anaesthetic blood test can help determine what pre-medication can be used, fluid rate is needed and what degree of risk will be involved with the anaesthetic.

Additionally, on the occasions where the blood tests indicate that the prognosis is very poor, then euthanasia can be performed before any uncomfortable and costly procedures are initiated, saving both you and your pet from further pain and anxiety.

Blood tests are not a substitute for a thorough clinical exam and good basic veterinary skills but they are very useful to help establish a diagnosis in more complicated cases. Being able to get immediate blood results is invaluable when dealing with critical cases and emergencies.

Blood tests can give a veterinarian a wealth of information about the dog's general health and about the efficiency of his internal organs. Abnormal levels of certain chemicals in his blood serum can indicate disease even before symptoms are visible.



Children and Dogs by Dr Trish Mills

Allowing your child to grow up with a pet can be a wonderful experience, but there are awful stories out there reminding us how dangerous dogs can be to children. Interactions between a child and a pet may help the child become a kinder more compassionate individual but their relationship needs to be without fear and injury.

Introducing dogs and children

When first introducing children and dogs try and have 2 adults present - one to control the dog and one to direct the child. Introductions should only be done once all the pets and children are quiet and calm. If you have a jumping or exuberant dog

you may want to put it on a leash for more control. If the dog growls at the child verbally correct the dog to let it know that that behavior is not acceptable and remove it from the situation until it is calm. Then try again. If verbal commands do not work you can correct the animal by startling it (for example with a water pistol) - remember not to terrify or harshly punish the dog as this may teach them that when the child is present horrible things happen.

Playing

Puppies and dogs have jaws and teeth instead of hands and thumbs and so they play using their

Children and Dogs by Dr Trish Mills

mouths. Puppies and dogs also box, rear and pounce on each other when playing and they show these same behaviours when playing with children and people. Due to their energy and sometimes lack of control and intensity playing with dogs can result in injury. It is not reasonable to make your dog responsible for the course that play will take. We cannot know if a dog understands how fragile young children can be and so adult guidance and supervision must be provided. When an animal is playing too roughly - stop play (keep still, no eye contact), say "no", you can startle the animal (don't terrify it), and then ask the dog to do something else. For example, if a puppy is mouthing/biting too hard - say no, stop moving and gently remove the body part being mouthed/bitten, and then quickly offer an alternative, appropriate toy for the puppy to chew on. Do not swat/hit the animal as this only stimulates a reactive dog and teaches them that rough play encourages rough play. Also, do not use forceful corrections (growling in your dogs face, forcing a dog to roll over etc.) - we should be smarter than that and should not have to manhandle our pets, especially if we are expecting to teach our children to be able to be in control of a boisterous 60 kilogram Great Dane! A child attempting to harshly correct a dog may be cause for a dog to react aggressively and harm the child.

What children should and shouldn't do

Understanding the motivation behind a dog biting a child can be easy - it is often something that may push us to react harshly to our children! Please look closely at the posters included with this article and use them to explain to your children what unsuitable and suitable behavior is when around a dog - whether it's your own dog or a strange dog the same rules apply. Children can be bad-mannered and relentless but parents expect their dog to be a saint even when



pestered by a child and are then surprised when the dog takes action. Most of the time we miss the warning signals given by our dogs and so the bite then seems to be "out of the blue". Encourage gentle handling of pets - no pulling, no tugging, no pounding on the dog! They should treat your pets like companions, not like a stuffed toy. Calm, positive interactions where the child is polite and kind- no teasing. Your children can give treats to your dog for good behaviour to make sure your dog enjoys being in the company of your children. Pets can teach your children many lessons, one example is responsibility. Involve the children in the feeding, walking and playing with your dog - this will help the dog bond with them and may encourage the dog to show more patience/tolerance with the children.

Aggression

Predatory aggression - some dogs can show a strong predatory response when exposed to young children. This is one of the reasons it is so important to supervise dogs around children.

Aggression from *pain* or *fear* is usually associated with children 18 to 36 months: older pets with arthritis or those with chronic ear infections can show aggression due to pain when the sore area is grabbed by a child. Children at this age are also often very vocal and energetic with erratic movements which may scare some dogs causing them to show signs of aggression. Parents should teach their children to look for signs that the dog is fearful or anxious, and then the child should know to back-off.

Remember

It is never safe to leave a young child alone with a dog - known or unknown. This may seem extreme but injury and death are no less heartbreaking just because the animal "didn't mean to do it". Even muzzled dogs can harm a child.

We shape our pet's behaviour, that includes ourselves as adults as well as our children.



Staff Profile

Lloyd Riuzvidzo

Lloyd joined the practice in April 2010. Lloyd is one of our very dedicated and capable kennel hands who assists in looking after your precious animals.

Lloyd is married to Joyce.

Lloyd enjoys learning as much as he can about your animals and he gets a lot of his knowledge from the nurses. He enjoys reading books to further his knowledge about dogs and cats. Lloyd enjoys watching the animals when they are scanned and scoped.

In his spare time, Lloyd enjoys watching soccer and travelling when he has some time off. He also enjoys going to church.



To make you smile

If we learned from our dogs:

When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.

Let others know when they've invaded your territory.

Take naps and stretch before rising.

Run, romp, and play every day.

Thrive on attention and touching.

Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

Stop to lie on your back on the grass.

Drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree on hot days.

Show when you're happy, let those who made you that way know it!

Forgive those who scold you and ... show them you love them.

Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.

Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.

Stop when you have had enough.

Be loyal and never betray a friend.

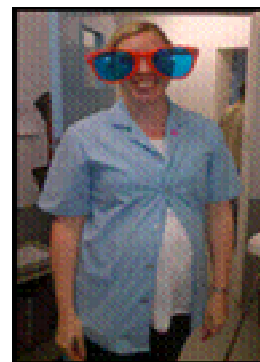
Never pretend to be something you're not.

Never give up - if something you want is buried, dig until you find it.

And MOST of all... When someone is having a bad day,

Be silent, sit close by and let them know you love them.

Jackson and Trish having fun!



If you have a story about your pet that you would like to share with us, then please e-mail it to lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za